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ANTHROPOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE SKELETAL MATERIAL FROM THE CEMETERY AT RÖSZKE-KÓSZÓ FARM FROM THE 14–15TH CENTURIES

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In the spring of 1966, the Ferenc Móra Museum was informed that in the farm-yard of József Kószó, during the planting of trees, some human skeletons were found. The rescue excavation took place under the leadership of Alajos Bálint, director of the museum that time, between May 20th and June 6th 1966. On the basis of grave furniture, the cemetery may be ascribed to the 14—15th centuries (BÁLINT, 1967).

Most graves were of SW—NE orientation. Several overburyings were also found in the cemetery. In one case, the skeletons lay in eight layers one over the other; the majority of graves were disturbed.

In the course of the excavation some relics of a building that must have belonged to the foundation of a church, supposedly of a tower or steeple came to light. It will be the task of further excavations to decide whether or not the foundation exposed is really that of a mediaeval church and the graves are parts of a cemetery skirting that church.

The archaelogical elaboration of the cemetery has not yet taken place. We have deemed advisable, therefore, to specify the grave furniture, as follows. (The data are published on the basis of the record of the excavation prepared by Alajos Bálint — and I wish to thank him sincerely here for making them available to me.)

Grave No. 9: Iron object, coffin-nails
Grave No. 15: Glass bottle of spherical form
Grave No. 16: Coffin-nail, scattered fragments of a plate-like girdle-set
Grave No. 18: Bronze buttons
Grave No. 19: Ring
Grave No. 23: Coffin-botton
Garve No. 27: An oblon bronze clasp with plate, a girdle set with the remains of a leather belt
Grave No. 30: Girdle relic in bad condition
Grave No. 31: Necklace with pearls
Grave No. 35: Bronze „seal-ring"
Grave No. 39: Horse's canine
Grave No. 54: Bronze buttons
Grave No. 60: Girdle set lathe-turned of bone.

During the excavation, 63 graves were opened but a number of times it occurred that in one grave the bone relics of more than one individuals were

found. Therefore, the bone relics of altogether 67 individuals have been rescued.

During elaboration I followed the MARTIN's method (MARTIN—SALLER, 1957).

48 per cent of the material was fragmentary, unfitted for metrical analysis, 52 per cent of it is in good condition. 29 per cent of the material in good condition was (10 male), 37 per cent (13 female) and 34 per cent (12 infants and juveniles). Some data concerning the relation of sex and age, as well as the condition of the material are included in Table 1.

The general characterization of the series, making use of the data shown in Tables 2 and 3, is as follows:

Males: Cranium is mesocranic but brachycranic and hyperbrachycranic are also found, the indices being hypsicranic, tapeinocranic, resp. metriocranic. The cranial autline is in vertical norm pentagonoid but ovoid cranial outlines can also be found. On the basis of the transversal-frontoparietal index, the forehead is generally stenometopic, the glabella being, as a rule, of third degree. The cranial capacity is euencephalic.

The facial cranium is, on the basis of facial index generally mesoprosopic, the upper face mesene. The fossa canina is slight, or medium depth. The orbit is meso-hypsiconch, the nose is leptorrhine, the palate is leptostaphyline. Alveolar prognathism is generally absent or not more than moderate. On the basis of the total facial index, the face orthognathous.

Females: Cranium is brachycranic, with a considerable number of hyperbrachycranic elements, with hypsicranic, metriocranic, or tapeinocranic indices. The cranial outline in the vertical norm is pentagonoid but ovoid cranial outlines are also present. The forehead is, on the basis of the transversal-frontoparietal index metriometopic, or eurymetopic but like in males, stenometopic foreheads can be found too. The cranial capacity is — like in males — euencephalic.

The facial cranium is — distinct from that of males — generally euryprosopic. On the basis of upper facial index, the face is — like that of males — mesene. The fossa canina is slight, or of medium depth. The orbit is mesoconch, the nose is leptorrhine, the palatale is brachystaphyline. Alveolar prognathism is generally absent or moderate. On the basis of the total facial index, the face is mostly orthognathous.

The stature of males, as well as that of females, varies between large intervals, but at any rate, a medium stature is characteristic. Tall statures also occur in both sexes.

Between the metrical characteristics of both sexes there in no considerable difference. Differences appear only when considering the cranial and facial indexes.

Anatomical variations are apparent in several crania. In males, there occurred in one case from ten metopic suture (grave 28), os epiptericum dextrum (grave 39), torus palatinus sagittalis (grave 62) and suture bones (grave 39). In females, there could be found in one case from thirteen os epiptericum dextrum (grave 52), in three cases os epiptericum sinistrum (graves 52, 59, 9), in three cases torus palatinus sagitalis (graves 7, 52, 63), in one case os apicis lateralis sinistri et dextri (grave 52), and in one cranium suture bones (grave 52). In males one, in females two plagiocephalic crania found.

Table 1. Anthropological material of the cemetery at Röszke from the centuries 14—15th

Characterisation of the material		Inf. I.	Inf. II.	Juv.	Ad.	Mat.	Sen.	Total No. pc.
Fragmentary (unmeasuered)	Males	—	—	—	6	5	—	11 (35)
	Females	—	—	—	5	1	—	6 (18)
	Undeterminable	9	3	3	—	—	—	15 (47)
	Total:	9	3	3	11	6	—	32
Well preserved (measured)	Males	—	—	—	4	5	1	10 (29)
	Females	—	—	—	9	4	—	13 (37)
	Undeterminable	4	6	2	—	—	—	12 (34)
	Total:	4	6	2	13	9	1	35
	Sum-total:	13 19 pc.	9 13 pc.	5 8 pc.	24 36 pc.	15 22 pc.	1 2 pc.	67

Table 2. Distribution of the principal metrical characters

Characters			Males N	Males pc.	Females N	Females pc.	Total N	Total pc.
8:1 Cranial index	Mesocranic	75,0—79,9	3	(37,5)	2	(16,7)	5	(25,0)
	Brachycranic	80,0—84,9	2	(25,0)	6	(50,0)	8	(40,0)
	Hyperbrachycranic	85,0—89,9	3	(37,5)	4	(33,3)	6	(30,0)
	Total:		8		12		20	
17:1 Lenght-height index	Orthocranic	70,0—74,9	3	(37,5)	3	(27,3)	6	(31,6)
	Hypsicranic	75,0—x	5	(62,5)	8	(72,7)	13	(68,4)
	Total:		8		11		19	
17:8 Breadth-height index	Tapeinocranic	x—91,9	3	(42,9)	5	(41,7)	8	(42,1)
	Metriocranic	92,0—97,9	3	(42,9)	7	(58,3)	10	(52,6)
	Acrocranic	98,0—x	1	(14,2)	—		1	(5,3)
	Total:		7		12		19	
9:8 Frontoparietal index	Stenometopic	x—65,9	5	(55,6)	3	(27,2)	8	(40,0)
	Metriometopic	66,0—68,9	3	(33,3)	4	(36,4)	7	(35,0)
	Eurometopic	69,0—x	1	(11,1)	4	(36,4)	5	(25,0)
	Total:		9		11		20	
47:45 Facial index	Hypereuryprosopic	x—79,9	—		1	(20,0)	1	(10,0)
	Euryprosopic	80,0—84,9	1	(20,0)	3	(60,0)	4	(40,0)
	Mesoprosopic	85,0—89,9	3	(60,0)	1	(20,0)	4	(40,0)
	Leptoprosopic	90,0—94,9	1	(20,0)	—		1	(10,0)
	Total:		5		5		10	
48:45 Upper facial index	Euryene	45,0—49,9	1	(14,3)	2	(25,0)	3	(20,0)
	Mesene	50,0—54,9	6	(85,7)	6	(75,0)	12	(80,0)
	Total:		7		8		15	

Characters			Males N	Males pc.	Females N	Females pc.	Total N	Total pc.
52:51 Orbital index	Chamaeconch	x—75,9	2	(22,2)	3	(33,3)	5	(27,8)
	Mesoconch	76,0—84,9	4	(44,5)	5	(55,6)	9	(50,0)
	Hypsiconch	85,0—x	3	(33,3)	1	(11,1)	4	(22,2)
		Total:	9		9		18	
54:55 Nasal index	Leptorrhine	x—46,9	7	(77,8)	4	(50,0)	11	(64,8)
	Mesorrhine	47,0—50,9	1	(11,1)	2	(25,0)	3	(17,6)
	Chamaerrhine	51,0—57,9	1	(11,1)	2	(25,0)	3	(17,6)
		Total:	9		8		17	
63:62 Palatal index	Leptostaphyline	x—79,9	5	(83,3)	1	(33,3)	6	(66,7)
	Brachystaphyline	85,0—x	1	(16,7)	2	(66,7)	3	(33,3)
		Total	6		3		9	
38. Cranial capacity		Males / Females						
	Euencephalic	1301—1450 / 1151—1300	5	(71,4)	8	(72,7)	13	(72,2)
	Aristencephalic	1451—x / 1301—x	2	(28,6)	3	(27,3)	5	(27,8)
		Total:	7		11		18	
72. Total facial index	Mesognathous	80°—84°	1	(16,7)	2	(28,6)	3	(23,1)
	Orthognathous	85°—92°	5	(83,3)	5	(71,4)	10	(76,9)
		Total:	6		7		13	
Calculated stature		Males / Females						
	Short	150—159,9 / 140—148,9	2	(10,5)	—		2	(5,4)
	Short medium	160—163,9 / 149—152,9	3	(15,8)	2	(11,1)	5	(13,5)
	Medium	164—166,9 / 153—155,9	6	(31,6)	8	(44,4)	14	(37,8)
	Tall medium	167—169,9 / 156—158,9	3	(15,8)	3	(16,7)	6	(16,2)
	Tall	170—179,9 / 159—167,9	5	(26,3)	5	(27,8)	10	(27,1)
		Total:	19		18		37	

Plate I. Röszke—Kószó farm, 14—15th century Grave 1. p—x, (Fem.)

Plate II. Röszke—Kószó farm, 14—15th century Grave 39. crB—x, (Male)

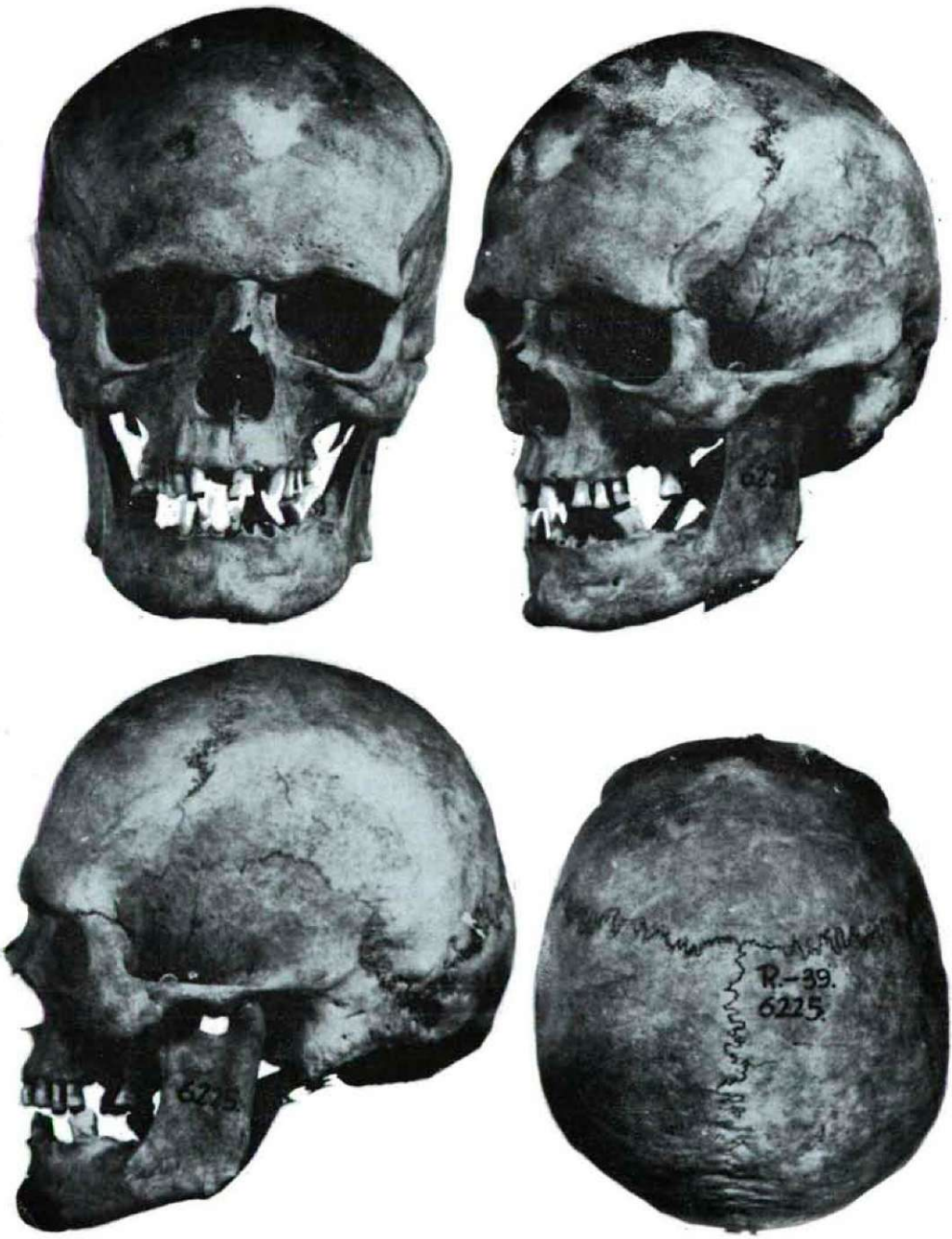

Table 3. Distribution of morphological characters

Characteristics		Males		Females		Together	
		N	pc.	N	pc.	N	pc.
Norma verticalis	Pentagonoid	1	(20)	6	(55)	7	(35)
	Ovoid	3	(60)	4	(36)	7	(35)
	Sphenoid	1	(20)	1	(9)	2	(10)
	Total:	5		11		20	
Glabella	Broca 1	1	(10)	6	(46)	7	(30)
	Broca 2	3	(30)	7	(54)	10	(44)
	Broca 3	5	(50)	—		5	(22)
	Broca 4	1	(10)	—		1	(4)
	Total:	10		13		23	
Fossa canina	2. Slight	5	(56)	4	(44)	9	(50)
	3. Medium	4	(44)	4	(44)	8	(44)
	4. Deep	—		1	(12)	1	(6)
	Total:	9		9		18	
Alveolar prognathism	1. Absent	4	(44)	3	(33)	7	(39)
	2. Moderate	4	(44)	4	(44)	8	(44)
	3. Pronounced	1	(12)	2	(23)	3	(17)
	Total:	9		9		18	

I have perfomed the taxonomical analysis according to P. LIPTÁK's method (LIPTÁK, 1969), with his help, for which I express my thanks to him.

Both in males and females only a rather low number of crania was suitable for taxonomical analysis in males seven, in females eight. According to the result of the taxonomical analysis, in males the following characteristic ensembles can be demonstrated: nordoid, cromagnoid and brachycranic elements (Plate I). Inside the brachycranic group of females, the occurrence of Pamirian race is more frequent. Within the brachycranic group, the cromagnoid race is also represented revealed by the presence of the eurymetopic frontoparietal index (Plate II).

Owing to the low number of cases in this meterial, I refrain from drawing far-reaching conclusions.

Comparing the mediaeval population at Röszke on the basis of the result of the taxonomical analysis, with other series, we find that in relation to the population of Baja—Pető in the 11th—16th centuries (LOTTERHOF, 1968) a difference is revealed owing to the predominance of Mediterranean elements there. In order of importance, that is followed by a high number of brachycranic elements. A comparison is rather difficult as in the case of Baja—Pető, the separation of Mediaveal graves from those of the Arpadian Age did not take place

archaeologically; the brachycranic elements came most probably from the mediaeval graves.

In the case of the similarly mediaeval cemetery at Mohács—Csele (NEMESKÉRI—DEÁK, 1965), the comparatively high number of brachycranic elements can also be demonstrated.

In the populations originating from the Transdanubian Fonyód (DEZSŐ et al., 1963) the brachycranic elements lose importance.

In mediaeval cemeteries anthropological evaluations have been carried out only in a few cases, therefore no far-reaching should be drawn conclusions. On the basis of data from other cemeteries we know that in the Middle Ages a pronounced brachycephalic procedure took place wich is further verified by this population at Röszke, although their case number is low.

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